

MINUTES OF THE FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 4th July 2007 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Coughlin (Chair) and Councillors V Brown (alternate for Councillor Corcoran), Detre, J Long, Malik and Motley (alternate for Councillor Leaman).

1. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None.

2. Deputations

None.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 6th June 2007

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting held on 1st May 2007 be received and approved as an accurate record subject to an amendment to the date indicated on page 1 of the minutes.

4. Matters Arising

Progress report – One Stop Shops and Tricycle Theatre

Members expressed concerns that they had again been provided with little information regarding the status of the One Stop Shops and the Tricycle Theatre and stressed the importance of keeping residents informed about those services that were available such as the operation of an appointments system in the One Stop Shop. The Chair queried whether there was sufficient space within the One Stop Shop to accommodate confidential appointments. Members sought evidence that there had been an increase in telephone calls from One Stop Shop customers and queried why the feedback from a Customer Survey had not been presented to Members.

Members requested that a detailed report on this matter be presented to the meeting of the Select Committee on Wednesday, 25th July 2007 and that the appropriate lead officer / Lead Member attend the meeting to provide clarification about the operation of the One Stop Shops and Tricycle Theatre.

Progress report - Carlyon Print

Members requested that a further progress report regarding Carlyon Print be presented at a meeting of the Select Committee in September/October 2007. In particular, Members sought clarification about the redundancy, retirement and employment opportunities for employees at Carlyon Print.

5. **Call-in of Executive Decisions from the meeting of the Executive on Monday, 18th June 2007**

There were none.

6. **The Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 18th June 2007**

RESOLVED:-

that the Executive List of Decisions for the meeting that took place on Monday, 18th June 2007 be noted.

7. **Briefing notes/information updates requested by the Select Committee following consideration of Version 1 (2007/08) of the Forward Plan**

(i) *Discretionary Rate Relief Policy*

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

(ii) *Libraries Strategy*

Members of the Select Committee queried why the report to the Executive had been further delayed and requested that the issue be considered further by the Select Committee once the timescales for decision making had been clarified and the report progressed, following forthcoming PCG discussions.

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

(iii) *Review of Free Parking Areas*

Members commented on the lack of detail contained in the briefing note and indicated that the matter should be monitored further.

RESOLVED:-

(i) that the briefing note be noted; and

(ii) that a further update be presented to the next meeting on 25th July 2007 to provide clarification about the timescales for decision making and update members about the proposed report.

(iv) *Wembley Security Proposals*

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

(v) Dollis-Hill House – Results of Marketing Exercise

RESOLVED:-

that the briefing note be noted.

(vi) Award of Contract for the Non HRA Housing and Social Care PFI Project

Maggie Rafalowicz (Assistant Director, Housing Strategy and Regeneration) introduced the briefing note before Members, explained the background to the proposed report to the Executive in September 2007 and provided detail about the proposed developments including the creation of up to 500 new affordable homes, including 35 units for Learning Disabilities. Members were advised that the Non HRA Housing and Social Care PFI Project had been a timely and complex process but that following presentation of the final business case to the Executive in September 2007, financial close would take place by December 2007.

In response to questions from the Chair regarding the financial implications of further delays to the project, primarily as a result of waiting for planning permissions, Ms Rafalowicz explained that complex negotiations had taken place in an effort to reduce costs, identify the most suitable sites for development, undertake valuation exercises and identify various housing options within the scheme. Members noted that the project had already been delayed as a result of difficulties in securing certain sites.

Following a further query from the Chair regarding concerns that current funding would not be sufficient to deliver the scheme if further delays were experienced, Members were reminded that the timescales for decision making were inflexible and the costs of the scheme would have to be finalised by the end of July 2007. Members noted that certain aspects of the agreement had however changed such as the duration of the term.

Some members of the Select Committee sought clarification about a number of specific sites which would be included in the first phase of unit delivery, a topic for discussion at the Planning Committee meeting which was underway. Commenting on Tudor Gardens and Melrose Avenue, Ms Rafalowicz explained that there had been lengthy discussions with users of the existing Melrose Avenue scheme and their families. Detailed work had been undertaken with both planners and residents about the delivery options. It was clarified that the site at Tudor Gardens had been almost totally acquired.

Ms Rafalowicz then went on to provide information about empty sites and the implications for residents in Chevening Road. Following questions about the provision of an alternative site for the nursery, Members were advised that residents had been informed about the site proposals and the planning consultation prior to an application being submitted. Due to its size, this was an important site which was integral to the project. However, it was acknowledged that there was likely to be strong

opposition to the use of the site and Members would have to consider the importance of creating new homes. No satisfactory alternative site had been identified but the lease would continue on the existing site until 2010. Ms Rafalowicz was unable to confirm if the nursery and the Islamia School had been notified that their leases would not be renewed beyond 2010.

In response to Councillor J Long's query concerning Clock Cottage, Ms Rafalowicz explained that this aspect may now have been pulled from the forthcoming Executive report but stressed that Clock Cottage was a large site and therefore very important. It was noted that St Luke's Hospice had previously expressed an interest in purchasing the site.

It was stressed that pulling sites out of the project could have detrimental financial implications and may result in the developer opting out of the project. Consequently it was important that sites be secured and receive planning permission by October 2007 so that financial closure could take place by December 2007. Members were advised that this did not mean that properties had to be empty by this point as there would sufficient time thereafter to resolve relocation issues.

Councillor Motley expressed further concerns regarding the proposed use of various sites including Chevening Road and recommended that there be further detailed consideration about the future of the nursery and the options for relocation. He stressed the need for clear communication with residents and the presentation of positive options for the future of the nursery. Following comments about the potential pitfalls of the scheme and the lack of credible options, Ms Rafalowicz stressed that the Council was trying to identify other potential third party sites and bring them forward by October 2007.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the briefing note be noted;
- (ii) that it be noted that whilst wishing to express support for the PFI project, Members of the Forward Plan Select Committee have serious concerns about the removal of the nursery and of attempts being made to secure planning permission for sites within such tight timescales, which appear to place serious pressures on the realisation of the project;
- (iii) that Members receive clarification regarding the possible options for relocating the scout hut at Clock Cottage; and
- (iv) that an update be presented to the Select Committee at its meeting on 22nd August 2007, outlining the details of the final business case and developments to date. The lead member and relevant lead officer were requested to attend this meeting and respond to questions from members of the Select Committee.

(vii) Proposed Allocations Policy for Granville New Homes

Maggie Rafalowicz (Assistant Director, Housing Strategy and Regeneration) outlined the main details of the report regarding the Allocations Policy for Granville New Homes, which would be considered by the Executive on 16th July 2007. The report would seek Executive

approval for a number of changes to the previously agreed Allocations Policy.

In response to questions concerning the implications for leaseholders, Ms Rafalowicz explained that the Executive report would include greater detail regarding the impact on leaseholders. Members were advised that seven out of fourteen tenants in Marshall House were leaseholders and a high percentage of tenants were willing to move either into Granville Homes or elsewhere. It was confirmed that a significant amount of work had been done to address leaseholder rights and to identify suitable housing options for existing residents.

Following a query from the Chair regarding the legal implications of amending the Allocations Policy, the Legal Advisor highlighted the relevance of some case-law on this issue and the importance of ensuring that certain issues were taken into account. However, Members were advised that in this instance there were no legal concerns.

RESOLVED:

That the briefing note be noted.

(viii) Barham Park Estate Redevelopment Options

Maggie Rafalowicz (Assistant Director, Housing Strategy and Regeneration) provided an overview of the issues relating to the proposed Executive report on Barham Park Estate Redevelopment Options including the selection of Notting Hill Housing Trust as the Council's preferred delivery partner and the involvement of BHP to achieve a suitable redevelopment scheme. Despite attempts to secure funding and identify suitable options for redeveloping the site such as a likely BHP/Notting Hill Housing Trust collaboration, Members were advised that there was still considerable uncertainty about the redevelopment of the estate.

In response to a question regarding the selection of Notting Hill Housing Trust and the issue of funding, Ms Rafalowicz explained that a developer had to be identified before approaching central government for gap funding. It was noted that properties would have to be demolished before the site could be redeveloped and that it was difficult to find a balance given the Council's high housing waiting lists and the existing standard of housing on the estate. With regard to the issue of encroaching on Maybank open space, it was noted that whilst some small scale development could be possible, this land would be retained for sports and recreational usage.

Following a query from the Chair regarding Council/BHP investment to date on existing properties and whether there had been increased spend on the estate, Ms Rafalowicz explained that whilst BHP continued to maintain the estate, there had neither been an increase in maintenance funds or any improvements undertaken. It was stressed that the problems were as a result of structural decline and therefore the majority of properties needed to be demolished and rebuilt. Members were advised that the viability of the scheme relied on an increase in the

number of dwellings on the estate but that this had significant planning implications. Likewise, there was strong opposition from some tenants to Notting Hill Housing Trust's involvement in the project and concern amongst some residents about the proposed redevelopment.

The Chair queried whether a natural turnover of properties would be possible at the site but was advised that it would take approximately fifteen years for existing dwellings to be freed up in this manner and therefore more suitable ways of working with residents had to be identified. It was noted that Notting Hill Housing Trust was keen to maximise the number of dwellings included in the redevelopment (up to 386) and that a considerable amount of money had already been spent on developing proposals for the estate. Consequently, there were concerns that further delays to the project could result in them opting out. Due to current under occupancy it was proposed that redevelopment provided the opportunity to create more practical units.

In response to a question concerning future consultation with residents, Ms Rafalowicz explained that the last round of formal consultation had taken place in January 2007 and since this time the Council had been looking at what BHP could deliver. It was stressed that the focus was now on BHP and Notting Hill Housing Trust to take the redevelopment proposal forward together. Members were advised that public consultation had been a mixture of formal meetings, open public meetings, correspondence and ward councillor consultation at every stage of the process. BHP and Notting Hill Housing Trust were scheduled to meet next week.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the briefing note be noted; and
- (ii) that Members receive details about the amount of spend on maintaining the estate and clarification as to whether the maintenance costs at the estate were increasing.

8. The Forward Plan *Issue 2 (09.07.2007 to 09.11.2007)*

Issue 2 of the Forward Plan (09.07.2007 to 09.11.2007) was before members of the Select Committee. Following consideration of Issue 2 of the Forward Plan, the Select Committee made the following requests:-

Protective Parking at Wembley Stadium

The Select Committee asked that the report which is to be considered by the Highways Committee on 10th July 2007 be presented to the Select Committee at its meeting on 25th July 2007. Members sought detail regarding the decision which will be taken by the Highways Committee and an overview of the implications of Protective Parking at Wembley stadium.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer were requested to attend this meeting and respond to Members' questions about this item.

Libraries Strategy

The Select Committee requested a further update on this item to its meeting on Wednesday, 25th July 2007. In particular the Select Committee sought clarification about the proposed timescales for decision making and an explanation as to why the report had been further delayed.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to Members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Borough-wide Roll-Out of Voucher Parking Trial

The Select Committee requested a further briefing note on this item as an update on the timescales for decision making and progress of the proposed report. This briefing note was requested for the meeting of the Select Committee on 25th July 2007.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to Members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

Review of Free Parking Areas

The Select Committee confirmed that it had previously requested a briefing note on this item to its meeting on 25th July 2007.

The relevant Lead Member and lead officer were not requested to attend this meeting and respond to members' questions, subject to the level of detail contained in the briefing note.

9. Items considered by the Executive that were not included in the Forward Plan

There were none.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Forward Plan Select Committee will be held on Wednesday, 25th July 2007.

11. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm.

Councillor Coughlin
Chair